

# Hartford Historical Society

The Garipay House • 1461 Maple Street  
Hartford Village, Vermont 05047

HARTFORD • QUECHEE • WEST HARTFORD • WHITE RIVER JUNCTION • WILDER

Volume 23, No. 5

SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

July-August 2011

## ABENAKIS IN HARTFORD—Hiding in Plain Sight

By Martha Knapp

In our collections, we have a book called Conant's Vermont, a textbook written in 1890. Had I been educated in that era, information about Indians was available, although they were not referred to as Abenaki and of course there were many inaccuracies.

In 1961, I graduated from Springfield High School, in Springfield, Vermont. I received my diploma having learned in history that there never were any Indians in Vermont. I didn't learn otherwise until 1979 when I came back home to live in Hartford.

While looking for the voices of the Abenaki people, at first I saw their language posted up in signage all over the state of Vermont. Ottaqueechee, Winooki, Mascoma, Connecticut, Ompompanoosuc, Passumpsic, Missisquoi, Moosilauke, and Ascutney are not English words. They are Abenaki words spelled in an English way. We can continue with toboggan, squash, succotash, raccoon, moose, and skunk, to name just a few. There was a line of communications set up between the settlers and the Abenaki that I hope openly returns this year. Do you suppose our famous Vermont accent is related?

At this exciting time in Vermont history, because of many professors and scholars from UVM and Dartmouth College especially, the myth of there never being any Indians in Vermont, is itself becoming extinct. I recently received from the Vermont Historical Society, a teacher's guide for a history kit for students and their teachers called "Abenaki in Vermont". It has been available since 1998 and I hope it will be on the curriculum of all of our Vermont history classes from now on and updated as we learn more.

In order for us to be on the same page, these following quotes are facts I believe were missing in our Vermont History classes;

1. For most people and in most history books, Metacomet's (King Phillip's) death in 1676 and the dispersal of his followers is the final chapter in the story of Indian peoples in



Indians trading at Fort Dummer after 1724. Illustration looks like the Lakota meet the Pilgrims.

Conant's Vermont p131

*New England. And it is a short story. Most history books ignore or gloss over the thousands of years of human history in New England that predated the arrival of Europeans. Usually the action begins when Indian people, already ravaged by a major epidemic on the coast of New England in 1616--1619--or swept aside to make way for God's chosen people, as the Puritans said--met the pilgrims in 1620.<sup>i</sup>*

*2. Before contact and exposure to European epidemic diseases, Indian populations in New England exceeded 100,000, now survivors huddled in enclaves. Invisible to outsiders, they became invisible in history books.<sup>ii</sup>*

*3. 1609-Abenakis-10,000 in Vermont, 12,000 in New Hampshire. 1760 population of Abenakis at least 1200 in Vermont, 500 in New Hampshire.<sup>iii</sup>*

*4. If one wants to find Indians in New England after 1676, one usually must look to the north, where the Abenakis continued to resist, striking south to raid English settlements and carry off captives. But even then these Indians were often identified as "French Indians" from Canada rather than from New England..<sup>iv</sup>*

*5. In Vermont, Ethan and Ira Allen and their cronies laid claim to Abenaki lands and promoted the notion that Abenakis who resisted their efforts were visiting troublemakers from St. Francis, Quebec, not indigenous people trying to protect their homeland.<sup>v</sup>*

*6. In the north, the Abenaki strategy in pulling back into the farthest regions of their territory or maintaining a low profile on the peripheries of the new towns, villages and farms that sprang up on their homelands, reinforced the notion that Indians were fast disappearing from the region.<sup>vi</sup>*

*7. Generations of school children in Vermont were taught that there never were any Indians in the state, but today Abenakis are visible and active pursuing federal recogni-*

(Continued on page 3)

## From the Chair . . Summer Greetings!

Please be sure to check the expiration date on your mailing label. If you have renewed your membership, it should read Dec. 2011, or Dec. 2012 if you paid for two years. All memberships now expire in December, no matter what month you join or renew. It has been a challenge to keep the records up to date, so you are probably still receiving the newsletter even if you have neglected to send in your renewal. Notification of an error in the mailing label will be a big help to me!

Those of you who missed the annual meeting on June 8 also missed an informative presentation by Michael Tougias on the Indian Wars of New England. Announcement of Honor Roll members and election of officers are noted elsewhere in this newsletter. Since the annual meeting, Lorna Ricard has accepted an invitation to join the Board of Directors. Welcome aboard, Lorna!

Our Sept program will feature Captain Bushey of the Hartford Fire Dept. along with those delicious refreshments. Please let Mary Nadeau know if you would be willing to bake for any of our programs. If she has a few more numbers to call, each one might have to bake only twice a year! Mary can be reached at (802) 295-2123.

Thanks to all the 250<sup>th</sup> sponsors, the celebrations are well under way. As you read this, perhaps you are preparing to bake a fabulous birthday cake to enter in the contest sponsored by King Arthur Flour, or if you missed out on that announcement, it's not too late to go to the Wilder Club on July 4th for the big Birthday Bash. You might be able to buy a slice of the winning cake! [Or one of the other cakes]. Join in the fun and see what surprises are in store, some of which have been made possible by the generosity of TransCanada Corporation. Both this event and Old Home/Field Day on August 6 are being co-sponsored with Hartford Parks and Recreation Department. Hope to see you at both events, dressed in an outfit portraying any era you choose from Native American to the present! [Or at least a hat!] We hope to see a lot of hats on both occasions.

In lieu of a Vermont State Historical Fair, we will participate in the White River Valley Historical Fair to be held on August 20 at So. Royalton High School. In addition to the exhibits, there will be speakers, including Howard Coffin and the White River Valley Players performing segments of Ransom, local authors selling their books, and other vendors, as well as demonstrations of crafts. Be sure to stop by the Hartford Exhibit and say hello.

Dorothy



## August 20, 2011 - White River Valley Historical Fair

at the South Royalton High School

The White River Valley Players will be presenting **RANSOM** at 11:00 and 1:00. Speakers will include: Euclid Farnham, Nancy Boone, Bill Johnson, Howard Coffin and others.

There will be authors, crafters, and vendors on hand as well as more than ten Historical Societies presenting displays; each town selecting its own theme. Hartford is proud to display Martha Knapp's research on the Western Abenaki and Culture, as well as a display celebrating the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Quechee Gorge Bridge along with the New England Transportation Museum. If you can assist by "manning" the table for a while, help set up or take down, please phone Dorothy Yamashita - 603-448-1067.

Hope to see you there!

### Hartford Historical Society

Post Office Box 547, Hartford, VT 05047-0547

<http://www.hartfordhistory.org>

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(Continued from page 1)

tion, initiating and administering projects for cultural preservation and challenging the state to recognize their rights as a sovereign nation.<sup>vii</sup>



" Governor Shumlin signs bill recognizing two Vermont tribes April 22, 2011"

—Martha Knapp photo

How this

all relates to Hartford is very interesting to me. So far, I have found four stories that relate to the town of Hartford. These are the recorded mentions of Indians in Hartford history:

1. David Newton, after building his log cabin saw some Indians camping near a brook close to his cabin. He made some skids and used his oxen to move his log cabin quite a distance away and out of sight. David Newton came here in 1777 and so it was after he had built his log cabin.

2. Past this house, on a certain Monday morning in October, 1780, a messenger, Phineas Parkhurst galloped past on his way to Lebanon, and Stephen Tilden heard the words shouted out: "Indians--burning--Royalton." Five minutes more and the men at the Center of the Town and up and down the river were startled by the roar of the bell-mouthed alarm gun which summoned them to come armed to the tavern without delay. A party of Hartford men marched to Royalton that afternoon, too late for anything except to see the smoking ruins and hear brave Mrs. Hendee's story of the horrors of the morning.<sup>xi</sup>



Indian women building a birch bark wigwam. The homes belonged to the women in Abenaki society. Illustration from Conant's Vermont p130

3. Major David (Wright) served in the Continental Army, and at one time, when he was away at the war, word came that the Indians were coming down the White River to treat Hartford as they had previously treated Royalton. This was in 1781,(sic) and the family was now occupying the large house. On receiving the alarm the women and children of the region were to be sent to the fort at West Lebanon for safety. Mrs. Wright got the word in the night. It was in winter, and she told the hired man to hitch the steers to the sled and take such household goods as they could get together quickly. She rode on the sled with a baby one year old, and the other children walked. Dr. Dan Wright was then only four years old, but he always remembered the journey. His part was to carry a pillow, as all the children had to carry something, and that was as much as he could carry. At the fort many others were gathered, and among them came Mrs. Parkhurst, mother of Dr. Phineas Parkhurst who had barely escaped from the burning of Royalton.<sup>x</sup>

4. At the Pease Hotel which held local and traveling entertainments, c1813, a little girl went to the donation party and saw an Indian show there, the war whoop of which she never forgot.<sup>xi</sup>

I feel we must have traded with the Abenaki as all of the surrounding towns have accountings of some interactions at first, but maybe not. If so it is not documented. I'm beginning the task and hope to fill this gap for our Historical Society and as this is ongoing, we welcome anyone with stories or information to please share with us. I can only imagine that they cautiously avoided each other and the settlers were self sufficient and had new industries in mind for the land. Businessmen came after the wars were over and by 1797, the settlers were not worried about Indians. The Abenaki probably moved to other areas as that was one of their strategies for survival or figured out how to blend in. They might have returned for hunting and fishing periodically. **TO BE CONTINUED:**

**Next--Meeting Abenaki face to face in 1979 to find they were hiding in plain sight.**

<sup>i</sup> Colin Calloway, After King Phillip's War, (University Press of New England, 1997), Intro p2.

<sup>ii</sup> Calloway, After King Phillip's War, Intro p2

<sup>iii</sup> Hartford Historical Society File, Hand out from Donna Roberts Moody and John Moody lecture.

<sup>iv</sup> Calloway, After King Phillip's War, Intro, p4.

<sup>v</sup> Calloway, After King Phillip's War, Intro, p5.

<sup>vi</sup> Calloway, After King Phillip's War, Intro, p8.

<sup>vii</sup> Calloway, After King Phillip's War, Intro, p11.

<sup>viii</sup> From the Newton family history, now in the Library of Congress .

<sup>x</sup> The Old and the New no.2 1893-1901, published by the Ladies Reading Club, Hartford, VT p 41.

<sup>x</sup> The Old and the New no.2 1893-1901, published by the Ladies Reading Club, Hartford, VT p 28.

<sup>xi</sup> The Old and the New no.2 1893-1901, published by the Ladies Reading Club, Hartford, VT p 53.

# July 4<sup>th</sup> Birthday Bash Schedule:

## 10am – 3pm – Wilder Club & Library:

- Displays ongoing:
- Grange Theater Curtain
- Garden Club – Garden Quest & Potting Demonstrations
- Historical Society – Photos from Former Celebrations & The Wilder Dam
- Conservation Commission – Linking Lands Alliance - Wildlife in the Upper Valley
- Library Book Sale
- Birthday Cake Contest:
  - 10 – 11:30 – cakes delivered
  - Noon – Judging & prize awards
  - 1:00 – Sale of cake pieces - \$3-1 for winning cakes, donation for all others

## 3 – 10:30pm – Kilowatt Field South

- Goody Bags to the first ones thru the “gate”
- Vendors, Games, Music, Live Radio, Reenactors
- 3pm – Ed Larkin Dancers
- 5pm – Reenactment of the charter coming across the Connecticut River from New Hampshire
- 8pm – Live bands
- 9pm – Fireworks [July 5<sup>th</sup> Rain Date]

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## Mystery photo

I have received no ideas on the photo in the last issue, but the house in the March/April was just identified by Brian Smith as 24 Hazen Street [back when it was #29!]. Also I am happy to report David Briggs identified 2 mystery Quechee farm photos! Thanks Dave. Here’s one for this issue – I think it is in Wilder.



# Founding Family: The Tilden Family - from Lebanon, Connecticut to Hartford, Vermont

At the beginning of the formation of the town of Hartford, Vermont there were 61 grantees, some of whom never came to Hartford. All 61 were residents of towns in Connecticut in and around the Hartford, Connecticut. area. Many of them sold their right to others who were not lucky enough to gain an original share but were no less the first settlers of our town. There was a first and second distribution of land by the original grantees. One of these families was the Tilden family.

Stephen Tilden was born in 1724 in Lebanon, Connecticut. He came from a long line of settlers in Colonial America who came from England in the very early years. His ancestry reaches back in England to Richard Tyldon in 1475 of Benendon, Kent England. Stephen's ggGrandfather, Nathaniel, who first came to America was in Scituate, Massachusetts in 1635. Stephen's father, Stephen, removed from Scituate to Lebanon, Connecticut between 1690 and 1712.

When the distribution of land in Hartford, Vt. occurred, Stephen Tilden purchased of Samuel Porter, one of the original proprietors of the town, on Aug. 27, 1761, one whole right, or proprietor's share, containing about 400 acres of land, for the sum of ten shillings (\$2.50) and in 1767 moved to Hartford, VT and settled on the south side of White River, about two miles above the current village of White River Junction.

Under the distribution of land by pitches to the original right of Samuel Porter, Stephen Tilden acquired another 90 acres of land, which he gave to his son, Josiah, on Sept. 3, 1782.

He next pitched lot No. 62, of the second 100-acre division, drawn to the original right of Samuel Porter. This lot he gave to his son, Stephen Jr., on Sept. 2, 1784. On the 12th of August, 1797, he gave to his son Asa, one-half of the home farm, or 80 acres adjoining on the south, the home farm of Thomas Tracy, and later, Mr. Tilden purchased several other original rights and portions of rights, some of which he held until his death.

Mr. Tilden was an intelligent, public-spirited citizen, and was prominently identified with the civil and military affairs of the State and his town during his life time. He is first mentioned in the town records in 1775, when he was chosen a highway surveyor, and one of a committee to have charge of the school lands of the town. In 1776, he was one of the Committee of Safety, and was also Commissioner of Highways. He represented the town in the Legislature in 1778, '83, '84, '85, during which sessions he was placed on important committees—first, the Committee on War; secondly a committee to draw a letter forbidding delegates from Cumberland County to sit

in the Provincial Congress of the State of New York, and also on a committee to consider proceedings of the Court of Confiscation. In 1776, he voted in favor of the *Betterment Act*.

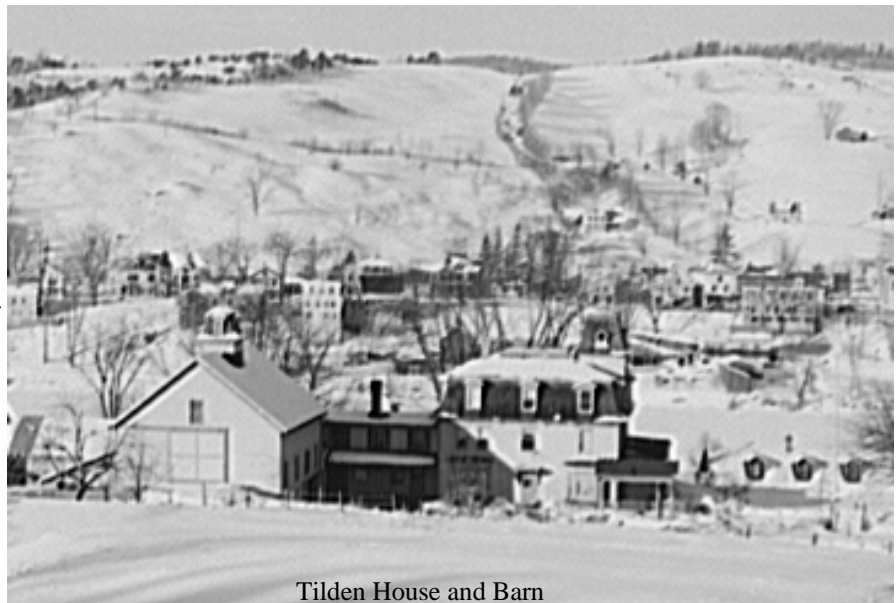
In 1780-81, he was one of the selectmen of the town. In all positions of trust he was faithful, energetic, and unselfish, and by his upright conduct invoked even the universal esteem of his political enemies.

Though lacking in book knowledge, he derived from experience a fund of solid knowledge of a practical kind, and this, with instincts that led him, generally, in the right direction, fitted him well for the duties incumbent upon him, both in private and in public life. Stephen died in his 89<sup>th</sup> year of life in March of 1813 and is buried in the Center of Town Cemetery.

Besides his sons, Stephen, Josiah and Asa, he had 5 daughters, Mary, Abigail, Theoda, Esther and Mary. All three sons remained in Hartford.

Capt. Josiah Tilden, son of Stephen, was born on 9 Apr 1760 in Lebanon, Connecticut and was a revolutionary war soldier. Josiah moved from Lebanon, Connecticut with his family to the newly formed town of Hartford, VT in 1767 when he was about 7 years old. He stayed in Vermont and was given land by his father in Sep 1782. He married Elizabeth Tracy in 14 Jan 1790 and died in Hartford, Vermont 1 Jan 1849. He is buried in Hartford Point Cemetery.

The Tilden home is still standing at the corner of the VA Cutoff Road and Overlook Drive. Capt. Josiah Tilden cleared the land and built the house around 1795. It was a "substantial, two story, square mansion, with a hip roof and hall through the middle." It was called the Quinneac and remained unchanged until 1870. The first school in the village "was conducted by Mr. Tilden in his barn." This school was in session as early as 1800.



Tilden House and Barn

# SEMIQUINCENTENNIAL CELEBRATIONS:

- **Spring – Winter** – daylight – White River Junction QUEST available at the Parks & Recreation Office
- **July 4** – 10am – 10:30pm - BIRTHDAY BASH & ANNUAL FIREWORKS at Kilowatt Park & Wilder Club & Library Sponsored by the Hartford Parks & Recreation Department & Hartford Historical Society
- **August 6** – OLD HOME DAY FIELD DAY & FUN RUN at Watson Park & Hartford village sites sponsored by the Hartford Historical Society and Hartford Parks & Recreation Department
  - 9:30 – 5KM ROAD RACE from Watson field
  - 10 – 3 – BOOK & BAKE SALE at Hartford Library
  - 10 – 3 – OLD QUILT DISPLAY at the Greater Hartford UCC Church
  - 10 – 3 – GARIPAY HOUSE OPEN with Lemonade & Cookies
  - 11 -1 – FIELD DAY GAMES and more at Watson field
  - Noon – PICNIC ON THE GREEN – BYO Lunch
  - 1 – 3 – REENACTMENT of H. Tucker, M. Heminway & R. Strong at the Garipay House
  - 2 – BEL CANTO SUMMER SINGERS CONCERT at the Greater Hartford UCC Church
  - 10:00-10:45 DAVE NORMAN talk entitled "White River--Many Times a Junction" and book signing at the Hartford Library
- **August 13th** -- ABENAKI WELCOME DAY featuring JEANNE BRINK, ABENAKI HISTORIAN AND BASKET-MAKER. MOOSE MEAT BARBEQUE COOKED BY CHIEF NATE OF THE KOASEK TRIBE, AND POT-LUCK SOCIAL TO FOLLOW.
- **Sept 10** – GLORY DAYS OF THE RAILROAD with expansion of a STREET DANCE after
- **Sept 10**—5-7 – SEMIQUINCENTENNIAL TURKEY DINNER at the Methodist Church, sponsored by the church
- **October 1** – QUECHEE GORGE BRIDGE CENTENNIAL at the Visitor Center
- **October 31** – GORY DAZE HALLOWEEN PARADE AND BALL sponsored by the MSM
- **Nov 9** 7pm – Jere Daniels speaks on the INTERNATIONAL POLITICS & CIRCUMSTANCES SURROUNDING THE CHARTERING OF HARTFORD and CLOSING CEREMONY at the Greater Hartford UCC sponsored by the Historical Society

## Commercial/Institutional Members:

Baker's Pottery

CEMMS Family Painting

Geo Barns

Hartford High School

Hartford Memorial Middle School

Kibby Equipment

Main Street Museum

Meeting House Furniture Restoration

New England Transportation Institute and Museum

## Membership rates:

Individual: \$15

Family [same address]: \$20

Senior: \$10

Senior family: \$15

Commercial/Institutional: \$25

Junior membership – No fee but needs a sponsor [contact Dorothy Yamashita]

# 250<sup>th</sup> REPORT

I hope you have had a chance to enjoy some of our events so far. The weather stayed dry for the Agricultural Heritage Festival where around 100 folks came to enjoy the rare tours of the Theron Boyd House and see the Hartford Barn Census presentation. There are some folks I would like to give a special thank-you to who helped make the day possible. One is John Dumville from the Vermont Division of Historic Preservation. He made it possible for us to hold the Agricultural Heritage Festival at the Theron Boyd House, volunteered his Saturday to clean and give tours, and did many other things to help us have a successful day. The other is Pete Schaal who generously donated his time and materials to place temporary wiring at the Theron Boyd House Barn for our Hartford Barn Census presentation, and has generously made it possible to hold the July 4<sup>th</sup> Birthday Party at the Wilder Club & Library. Dennis Backus and Leo Tucker from the Veterans Council were responsible for most of the events over Memorial Day Weekend, with thanks to all who participated, the School children for preparing the time capsule, and Jim and Ken Runnals for providing firewood for the encampment. Thanks to Frank J. Barrett who gave a fascinating



Theron Boyd House

talk on the exploration, chartering and settlement of our town, and to Martha Knapp, Donna Roberts Moody, John Moody and the Winter Center for Indigenous Traditions for the informative talk on the Abenaki in Hartford which broke all attendance records at the church. Special thanks to Leslie Rench's 5<sup>th</sup> Grade class from the White River School for the wonderful historic Quest of White River Junction.

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## HONOR ROLL

The Board is proud to announce the following additions to the Honor Roll:

**Alfonzo Guarino      Alfred Guarino      Judge Mahady      Ralph Lehman**

The contributions these men have made to the town of Hartford are far too numerous to recount in this limited space; the records will be on display in the Garipay House and at each program.

A reminder: you may submit a nomination at any time. There is a link to a form on our web site [[hartfordhistory.org](http://hartfordhistory.org)] or contact Pat if you'd like one mailed to you. Thanks

## MISSION STATEMENT

The Mission Statement of the Hartford Historical Society: To acquire, identify and preserve information and artifacts related to Hartford's past and communicate knowledge of local history through programs, publications, and other interaction with the community.

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## We are looking for our 'Farm Folks'!

Did you grow up on a farm in Hartford? Do you know someone who did? The Hartford Historic Preservation Commission is establishing a list of folks to interview for their new Agricultural Oral History Project to accompany the Hartford Barn census. Please let Pat Stark know about anyone you think we should add to the list. Thank you.

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## HHS Calendar

*Upcoming Programs, Meetings and Events*

**Summer OPEN HOUSE at the Garipay House** – May - September:

The 1st Tuesday of the month 6-8pm

The 2nd Sunday of the month 2-4pm

Or by Appointment [call pat at 295-3077 M-F 9-4]

2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday – Hartford Historic Preservation Commission meeting at the Municipal Building, 171 Bridge

street, White River Junction, at 4:30

4<sup>th</sup> Thursday – HHS Board of Directors Meeting – Garipay House May – October and the Hartford Library Nov

– Apr at 7 pm. For more information contact Dorothy Yamashita, Board Chairman.

**Wednesday, Sept. 14** – A History of the Hartford Fire Dept. by Captain Bushey followed by refreshments. 7:00 pm at the Greater Hartford United Church of Christ, 1721 Maple Street, Hartford Village

**Wednesday, Nov. 9** – Jere Daniel will let us know the FULL story of our Charter! Refreshments will follow. 7:00 pm at the Greater Hartford United Church of Christ, 1721 Maple Street, Hartford Village

Mary Nadeau does a wonderful job of obtaining interesting speakers for us, but she would like some help with providing refreshments. If you can help with this, please let her know. 295-2123. Thank you.

Don't forget the **Genealogy Center**, upstairs in the Hartford Library is open Monday afternoons

Please see the schedule for the 250<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebrations elsewhere in this Newsletter. Hope to see you there!

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### Hartford Historical Society

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